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The author points out that American law schools at present neglect the legislative point of view and should give special courses in the problems of legislation, if the technical difficulties of giving such courses can be overcome.

H. W. BALLANTINE

URBANA, ILL.

Retail Buying. By CLIFTON C. FIELD. Harper Bros., 1917.
Pp. 219. \$1.25.

Two sets of books have developed in the field of economic activity. One of these has been academic and theoretical, centering about value, distribution, and marginal utility. The other has offered detailed advice on the best way to make a sale. The former failed very largely to reach the "practical business man," but flourished like the biblical green bay tree in college courses. The latter found no standing except among business men, and not a great deal there. More recently a new generation of business books has arisen, dealing with economic problems in a way unknown and probably impossible before.

These new books are of many different degrees of excellence, though one and all have the same purpose in view. This purpose is to develop out of the real business experience of "the street" certain broadly applicable principles that will prove helpful to other business men. Perhaps too much stress is being laid upon the business experience of the writers of these books, in the hope that a large experience will cover a multitude of defects. Nevertheless there is no denying that a wealth of new material is thus being accumulated on many phases of the many-sided problem of the modern business man. The writers have gone pioneering for facts and have performed a notable service by blazing the way for a more extended and mature treatment.

Such a book is Mr. Clifton C. Field's *Retail Buying*. It covers a part of the field hitherto neglected—the equipment and practices of the buyer of merchandise. The author declares at the very outset the laudable purpose to "provide a simple and readable explanation of what is best today in buying principles and practice." As in so many other departments of business activity today, it is desired here to displace the old-fashioned, empirical, "rule-of-thumb" methods with scientific principles. It is a noble ambition, of course, though one is rarely deceived, by a mere historical description or by an emphatic assertion that "this is the best way," into believing that he is getting the real stuff of business science. Here is another case where "knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."

In these new business books that contain much valuable new material, one must forever keep in mind the distinction between facts and principles, between business gossip and business science. "The old adage is 'Goods well bought are half sold'" (p. 1), which does quite well enough for good business advice, but is not business science. One swallow does not make a summer, nor one instance establish a principle. Writers of the new business books do not always remember this.

Retail Buying has been carefully analyzed. There are four parts, dealing respectively with "The Merchant as a Buyer," "Merchandise," "Buying Practice," and "Stock Systems." The first is purely introductory; the second has a valuable chapter on "Sources of Merchandise"; the third is by far the best section, containing an excellent chapter on "Determining Qualities"; the last seems considerably detached from the rest and without any close logical connection. This last part is covered by other books more thoroughly and extensively. It is especially difficult to see how "Instruction to Salespeople" (chap. xiii) belongs in a book that purports to be a scientific treatment of retail buying.

The style is matter of fact, almost laconic. There is an element of stiffness and bluntness in it that appears to arise from lack of practice in writing. The discussion, however, is clear and usually simple. Heavy-faced leads have been set in at every change of topic, like persistent guideposts—perhaps a bit too persistent for the complete comfort of the wayfarer. The cursory reader, however, is thus enabled the more readily to find the topics in which he is interested.

The real contribution in this book is to be found in Part III, entitled "Buying Practice." It is just here that an undeveloped field was entered. No one has written satisfactorily about the work of the purchasing agent, the merchandise buyer. The general practice and the "best" practice are both of interest and suggestive. A far more extended "scientific" treatment of the "merchandising plan" would do a good service by discussing merchandising stock plans from a "scientific" point of view.

The important function performed by the merchandise buyer, the broad training and experience necessary, are clearly presented. With a better background of theory the writer might have shown what a factor for business control an expert buyer may become, how far he partakes of the entrepreneurial power. Highly developed faculties, foresight, keen judgment, and the ability to discern long-time issues must be his. The final words of this volume are interesting in this connection: "All of this discussion leads back to the original statement—that the function

of a buyer as a merchant is to buy merchandise according to a merchandise plan, to sell so as to make a satisfactory profit, and to manipulate his purchases so as to secure the proper number of turnovers and leave his stock in good condition at the end of the season. This is a big job for any man, for merchandising is a life's work, and it calls for the best efforts of a real merchant. Such a man is the ideal buyer."

C. S. DUNCAN

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Free Speech for Radicals. By THEODORE SCHROEDER. Riverside, Conn.: Hillacre Bookhouse, 1916. Pp. viii+206.

This book might appropriately be entitled "Free Speech for I.W.W.'s and Anarchists," for on the whole it undertakes the defense of this "most despised of all classes." In general, the writer treats his subject in a dispassionate manner and the book makes interesting reading, but the reader frequently is challenged to make active rejoinders to the many sweeping conclusions. In defending the right of free speech the author's premise would be stated something like this: free speech is a natural right guaranteed by the Constitution; any abridgment of the right is an abridgment of the Constitution and therefore wrong.

The implication of the eighteenth-century philosophy is obvious; but to go to his definition (p. 20): "By freedom of speech I do not mean the right to agree with the majority, but the right to say with impunity anything and everything which one chooses to say . . . including even treason and assassination . . . and to speak it with impunity so long as no actual material injury results to anyone, and when it results . . . to punish only for the contribution to that material injury and not for the mere speech as such."

In the first place, the Constitution does not guarantee the right to everyone "to say with impunity anything and everything which one chooses"; this is a wrong interpretation, for the fundamental law merely restricts the commonwealths from passing anti-free-speech laws. But in order to satisfy his own logic Mr. Schroeder is forced to conclude that it is wrong to punish "free speech as such" because even to prefer the charge would violate the Constitution, even though crime be committed. In other words, the Constitution protects everyone against the charge of the abuse of free speech.

In the second place, his formula attempting a definition of police-power administration is, to say the least, amateurish. Does he mean that society must await "actual material injury" before undertaking self-protection? Evidently this is the idea, for on another page (p. 88) he states: "Freedom of speech is wrongfully abridged whenever an individual is suppressed or punished except on the basis of an ascertained, actual, and material injury or imminent danger thereof." The reader is left to imagine what kind of order would